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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

This past year our Government has continued its close working relationship with educators, students and parents to ensure that all B.C. students receive the best possible education. For 2006–2007 our plan was to focus on three key areas: improving student achievement, ensuring a high quality education system, and improving literacy for all British Columbians. The following pages will outline how we have been largely successful in meeting our performance objectives.

British Columbia students are among the best in the world in math, reading and science. According to the most recent Foundation Skills Assessment results, 66 per cent of Grade 7 Aboriginal students are meeting or exceeding expectations in math—an eight per cent improvement from 2001-02 levels. The school completion rate for B.C. students remains at a record high 79 per cent.

While these are promising improvements, we need to find new ways to reach the almost 11,000 students who do not finish school every year and the other students who are struggling to meet expectations. Over the next three years we will focus on literacy, early learning, healthy schools and student achievement.

The Government of Canada, the Province and the First Nations Education Steering Committee signed an historic agreement that will lead to the recognition of First Nations' jurisdiction over First Nations' education in B.C. The Province also signed an agreement with the First Nations Education Steering Committee solidifying our commitment to work with First Nations to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for First Nations students. These two agreements will help us to close the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal British Columbians.

For one in four students, or approximately 9,000 children entering Kindergarten in B.C., there is a gap between the tools they need to be successful and the tools they have. That is why the Province is providing a total of $5 million for up to 80 StrongStart BC centres as part of ReadNow BC, the new provincial literacy plan. These centres offer a free drop-in program to support families and caregivers in influencing children's school readiness. Qualified early childhood educators will lead literacy activities, including stories, music and crafts to help children grow linguistically, physically and socially, and become comfortable in a school-like environment.

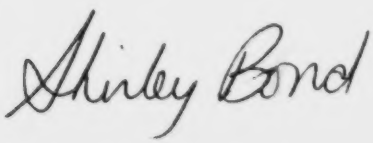
ReadNow BC will also help to increase the number of children who enter school with the pre-reading skills they need to succeed, while improving reading skills among school-aged children, Aboriginal people and adults. The first phase of ReadNow BC is providing learning

resources for parents and caregivers, culturally or linguistically appropriate learning materials for early learning programs with an emphasis on Aboriginal cultural content, and training for staff for early-years programs and other pre-literacy initiatives.

Proper nutrition and physical activity are important tools for ensuring that students are able to achieve their best. All 60 school districts participate in Action Schools! BC, a school-based program providing opportunities for children to be active. As well, we recently introduced parent and teacher resources, including a Healthy Living Guide for Families and Health Matters teacher resources, to help parents and teachers to encourage children and youth to be more physically active, because we know that healthy students are better able to learn.

We continue to look for better ways of delivering education and services to ensure that all of B.C.'s students receive a high-quality education. B.C.'s students are among the best in the world and we want to continue to ensure that they have a world of possibilities available to them upon graduation.

The Ministry of Education's *2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report* compares the actual results to the expected results outlined in the Ministry's *2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan*. I am accountable for those results as reported.



Honourable Shirley Bond
Minister of Education and Deputy Premier
Minister Responsible for Early Learning and Literacy

June 15, 2007

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Purpose of Ministry

The Ministry of Education provides leadership and funding, develops policy and legislation, oversees system governance, sets results-based standards, develops accountability frameworks, monitors performance and reports results for the K-12 education system. Government expanded the mandate of the Ministry of Education in 2005 to include literacy, early learning and public libraries. With these additional responsibilities, the Ministry has the scope to deliver a wider range of education services.

Legislation

The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry and its partners are set out under the *School Act*, the *Teaching Profession Act*, the *Independent School Act*, the *Library Act*, and accompanying regulations.

Clients

For the 2006/07 school year, the K-12 education system served approximately 580,000 public school students, approximately 67,000 independent school students and more than 2,800 home-schooled children. Of the public school students there are about 55,000 students who are Aboriginal, and about 3,800 students (who have a Charter right to a Francophone education) who are enrolled in Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique.

Approximately 62 per cent of British Columbians have active library cards, which they use on a regular basis. In addition, public libraries serve 98 per cent of B.C.'s population.

The Ministry, in partnership with Boards of Education, also provides early learning services to families and children (before they enter school) through initiatives such as StrongStart BC centres.

Partners[1]

The Ministry of Education co-governs K-12 education with Boards of Education and independent school authorities — education services are delivered locally through Boards of Education, public schools and independent schools.

The Public Library Services Branch of the Ministry, through 72 library boards and 3 library federations, provides leadership and support services for the operation of the 241 public library branches operating in British Columbia.

[1] http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/annualreport/2007/educ_partners.pdf.

Literacy services are delivered in partnership with public libraries, community literacy groups, schools, school districts, preschools, First Nations, friendship centres, senior centres, provincial literacy agencies, and post-secondary institutions.

Key Government Initiatives — Literacy

The Government of British Columbia has set a goal to make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent, and the Ministry of Education has been asked to lead this initiative.

Results from the latest Statistics Canada *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey*[2] show 40 per cent of adults in B.C. do not have sufficient reading skills to do everyday tasks, such as completing forms or researching information on the Internet. People with inadequate reading skills often have reduced earning potential and are not able to participate fully in a knowledge society.

As lead, the Ministry of Education is coordinating the development and implementation of the Provincial Literacy Action Plan — *ReadNow BC*. This Plan outlines the steps needed to help British Columbians improve their literacy skills, and is based on a cross ministry approach to coordinating policy, funding, programs and services. To meet the Plan's objectives, the Ministry will work with other ministries, public libraries, and provincial and community partners. For more information, please visit the Ministry website at: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/literacy/ .

[2] For more information on the *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey*, please visit: http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/all/ .

Strategic Context

Like any large organization, the Ministry of Education is influenced by the social, economic, cultural and political forces that are part of everyday life in British Columbia. Factors such as the number of students, the manner in which students are distributed across rural and urban areas, an aging population, labour relations, poverty levels, and children's health all have an impact on the education system.

For the reporting year, the greatest challenges facing the Ministry were literacy rates, childhood obesity, children's readiness for school, Aboriginal student performance, and demographic factors such as declining enrolment.

Literacy — 40 per cent of adults in B.C. do not have adequate reading skills

Over one *million* adult British Columbians, approximately 40 per cent, do not have a high degree of competency with everyday reading, according to the *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey, 2003*. Many of these adults, although they may be employed, are likely to have difficulty in meeting the increasing skill demands of a knowledge society.

Obesity — 26 per cent[3] of children in B.C are considered either overweight or obese

The rate of obesity continues to increase among Canadian children and youth. In the 1998/99 *National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth*, more than one-third of Canadian children were classified as overweight and 18 per cent as obese. Obesity is more common (25 per cent) in children living in families with incomes below the low income cut-off than those above (16 per cent). Fewer obese children (38 per cent) were active compared to non-obese children (47 per cent) and many obese children go on to become obese adults. As a result, these individuals experience a heightened risk of cardio- and cerebral-vascular diseases, Type II Diabetes, certain cancers and many musculoskeletal disorders.

Early Learning — 25 per cent of children are not developmentally ready to be successful when they enter Kindergarten

It is widely recognized that early learning experiences and development play a major role in a child's later academic success. Currently, approximately 25 per cent of children are not ready to succeed when they enter Kindergarten. Early learning is also critical to a child's success in school, and higher levels of literacy skills later in life.

[3] BCSTATS Infoline August 25, 2006.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

For the 2006/07 school year, the Ministry had approximately 63,727 registered ESL students. A growing proportion of our students require English as a Second Language services. Ministry data indicate that English as a Second Language students have a higher completion rate than non-ESL students.

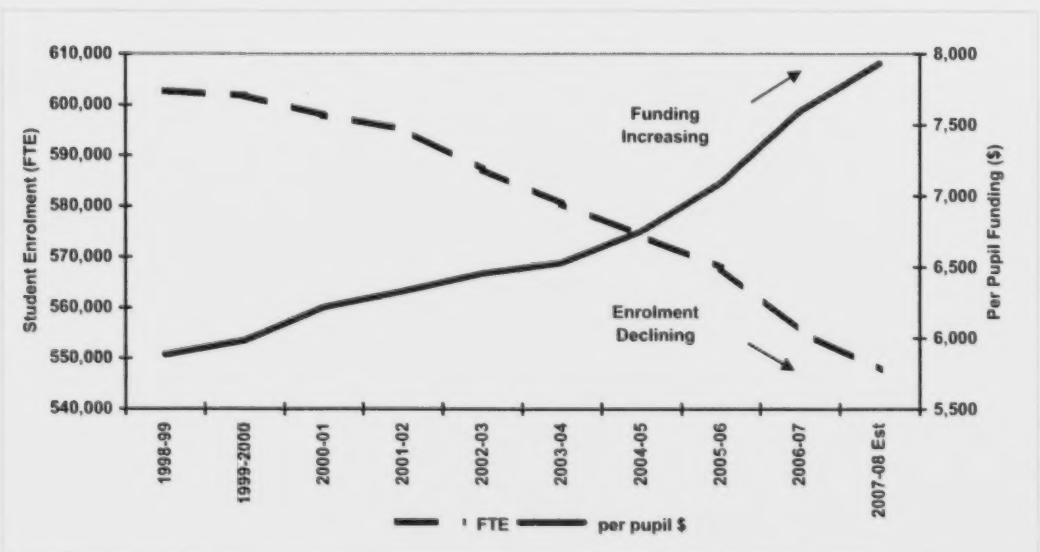
Declining Enrolment — there are 50,000 fewer students than there were in 2000/01

Since 2000/01, enrolment has declined by over 50,000 students and is expected to decline by another 25,000 over the next five years. Last year, school districts estimated they would have about 7,000 fewer students — however, when enrolment counts were finalized there were actually 12,300 fewer students. School districts forecast that they will have 7,574 fewer students next year (2007/08), with the total number of full-time students projected to be 547,840.

While the Ministry has no control over student enrolment numbers, declining student enrolment requires active management by Boards of Education.

As the graph below indicates, even though enrolment is declining, funding has continued to increase. Additional funding will help improve student achievement — with funding for Aboriginal students increasing by $3 million and for English as a Second Language students, by $3.8 million. As well, annual operating funding will provide school districts with $41.1 million to harmonize teacher salaries across B.C. Salary harmonization was part of facilitator Vince Ready's recommendations in his 2005 report.

FUNDING CONTINUES TO CLIMB DESPITE FALLING ENROLMENT



Report on Performance

Performance Plan Summary Table

- The results reported under the "Actual" column represent the latest data available at the time of publication (July 5, 2007). Targets relate to the next available reporting period.
- "Substantively achieved" is defined as being "almost achieved" or within 2 percentage points of the target.
- Further details on the data are available in the main body of the Report.

Goal 1: Improved student achievement **For greater detail see pages 13 to 22**	**Target**	**Actual**
Secondary school completion rate		
• Overall	79% (2005/06)	79% ACHIEVED
• Aboriginal students	49%	47% SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED
1.1 British Columbians are highly literate		
Adult Literacy — the percentage of adults who read at a level necessary for secondary school completion and entry into post-secondary institutions and trades training.	75% (2015/16)	60%
Reading and Numeracy Skills — the percentage of students in Grades 4 and 7 who meet or exceed standards (based on the Foundation Skills Assessment).		
• Numeracy Grade 4	87% (2005/06)	86% SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED
• Numeracy Grade 7	83%	84% EXCEEDED
• Reading Grade 4	79%	80% EXCEEDED
• Reading Grade 7	77%	73% NOT ACHIEVED
School Readiness — percentage of children who enter Kindergarten ready to succeed.	75% (2007/08)	75% (2004/05)
B.C.'s ranking in the Programme for International Student Assessment, amongst the 10 provinces, based on PISA 2003.	1st (2008/09)	2nd (2003/04)

Goal 1: Improved student achievement For greater detail see pages 13 to 22	Target	Actual
1.2 B.C. children live healthy lifestyles and make responsible life choices		
Rate of tobacco use for youth aged 15 to 19 years	16.5% (2005/06)	Data Not Available
Rate of physical activity for K-12 students	N/A	49% (2006/07)
1.3 Achievement will improve for all students please see "Completion rate" above		

Goal 2: A high quality performance-oriented education system. For greater detail see pages 22 to 27	Target	Actual
2.1 Focus on citizen-centered service delivery		
Satisfaction — percentage of public school parents and students (secondary) satisfied with educational program choices available to them.		
• Elementary school parents	73% (2006/07)	72% Substantively Achieved
• Secondary school parents	63%	63% Achieved
• Secondary school students	49%	48% Substantively Achieved
2.2 Focus on career development		
Transition rate — to post-secondary education	75% (2005/06)	72% (2005/06) Not Achieved
Number of students participating in industry training programs	3,600 (2005/06)	3,740 (2005/06) Exceeded
2.3 Continued emphasis on accountability		
Parental Involvement — per cent of school districts meeting expectations in District Reviews	90% (2006/07)	Data Not Available
Achieving Results — per cent of school districts meeting expectations in District Reviews	90% (2006/07)	Data Not Available

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

Goal 1: Improved student achievement

Continuous improvement in student achievement refers to both academic achievement (including reading, writing, numeracy, and computer skills) and non-academic achievement, such as learning to make responsible choices related to health and safety, and demonstrating the qualities of good citizenship. Well-educated citizens are better equipped to meet the demands of a modern economy, and are more likely to become productive, fully participative members of society.

Objective 1.1: British Columbians are highly literate

The Ministry of Education has the lead role for improving literacy, both provincially and nationally. At the national level, the Ministry works to improve literacy through participation in the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. At the provincial level, the Ministry and partners focus on building community capacity to improve literacy for community members of all ages.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- to continue to work in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development to focus on early learning so children are better prepared for Kindergarten;
- to assist communities in building capacity in order to address local literacy needs for all ages;
- to improve literacy (through public libraries) by facilitating access to information;
- to improve literacy through grants to school districts for projects designed to help students who struggle with literacy; and
- to take a national leadership role on literacy, through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2005/06 Actual
Secondary school completion rate — the percentage of students who complete Grade 12 within six years of starting Grade 8				
Overall	79%	79%	79%	79% ACHIEVED
Aboriginal	46%	48%	49%	47% SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED

Data Source: Data for completion rates are based on the Ministry of Education's Student Data Collection Form 1701, student transcripts, and provincial exams.

Notes: Student achievement levels are available for a number of student sub-populations, including Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, ESL, French immersion, and by gender on the Ministry website at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/grad/grad-rpt.php.

Discussion of Results

The completion rate[4] was chosen as a key performance measure because it is tangible evidence that students have succeeded in the K-12 education system, and because it allows students to make a successful transition to the next stage of their life — either post-secondary education and training or the workplace.

The Ministry met its goal of 79 per cent of students completing secondary school. While this is an outstanding achievement, our results have leveled off, with the completion rate remaining at 79 per cent over the last few years. In order to progress toward our goal for 2015/16 — an 85 per cent completion rate — the Ministry and its partners will continue to look for better ways of delivering education and services.

[4] The school completion rate is determined by calculating the percentage of students who graduate with a Dogwood Diploma within six years of starting Grade 8 for the first time in a B.C. public or independent school. Calculation of the completion rate requires an estimate for out migration from B.C. This estimate cannot be generated at the school level, therefore the completion rate is available only at District and Provincial levels.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Baseline	Actual	2011/2012 Target	2015/16 Target
Adult Literacy — the percentage of adults who read at a level necessary for secondary school completion and entry into post-secondary institutions and trades training	60%[1]	N/A[2]	68%[3]	75%[4]

Data Source: *The International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey 2003.*

Notes: [1] The baseline data is from the most recent survey (2003).

[2] IALSS is conducted sporadically, with the next survey scheduled for 2009.

[3] The target for IALSS 2009 is set for the year in which we expect the results to be made available (2011/2012). This target is new, and not in the previous *2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan.*

[4] As the baseline data and the targets are from different assessments, they cannot be compared.

Discussion of Results

The *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey* is an international comparative study conducted to provide participating countries with information about the literacy skills of their adult populations. The Survey measures the literacy and numeracy skills of a nationally representative sample of participants aged from 16 years to 65 years, from six participating countries.

Participants were scored on a proficiency scale from 1 to 5 (lowest to highest). Level 3 is considered a suitable minimum for coping with the demands of everyday life and work in a complex, advanced society. It denotes roughly the skill level required for successful secondary school completion and entry into post-secondary institutions and trades training. Like higher levels, it requires the ability to integrate several sources of information and solve more complex problems.

This measure was chosen because it indicates how British Columbia performs in comparison to other jurisdictions, and allows the Ministry to assess its progress in meeting the Government's great goal of becoming the most literate jurisdiction on the continent. The challenge in using the survey as a performance measure is that it is conducted sporadically. At present, however, there is no other tool that adequately measures adult literacy in a timely manner. The Ministry is working in conjunction with the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Ministry of Attorney General to develop an action plan for tracking progress.

At this point, the Ministry only has baseline data from The *Adult Literacy and Skills Survey 2003*, and will be unable to report any progress until data from the 2009 assessment becomes available.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2005/06 Actual
Reading and Numeracy Skills — the percentage of students who meet or exceed standards				
Numeracy Grade 4	88%	87%	87%	86% Substantively Achieved
Numeracy Grade 7	83%	83%	83%	84% Exceeded
Reading Grade 4	80%	79%	79%	80% Exceeded
Reading Grade 7	80%	77%	77%	73% Not Achieved

Data Source: The Foundation Skills Assessment, Ministry of Education

Notes: FSA results for the 2006/07 school year will be ready in September 2007.

Discussion of Results

The Foundation Skills Assessment[5] is used to measure the percentage of public and independent school students in Grades 4 and 7 who meet or exceed grade level expectations in key areas of student learning. The assessment is administered to all students at these grade levels, and focuses on Reading, Writing, and Numeracy because these skills form the foundation for other learning. Foundation Skills Assessment standards, which are set by the Ministry, are based on the recommendations of B.C. teachers.

The Foundation Skills Assessment was chosen as a measure because it can indicate shifts in achievement on a broad scale, such as when there is an overall improvement or decline in reading skills. As well, the data gathered from the assessments provides all levels of the education system (School Planning Councils, for example) with an opportunity to plan more effectively, and to focus on key priorities that will help the Ministry and the Government meet their strategic goals. These results are valuable because teachers can use them to identify where to help students improve.

[5] Foundation Skills Assessment results are available online at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/achieve/fsa-bas.php.

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2007/08 Target	2015/16 Target	Actual
School Readiness — the percentage of children who enter Kindergarten ready to succeed	75%	75%[1]	85%	DATA NOT AVAILABLE[2]

Data Source: The Early Development Instrument - The Human and Early Learning Partnership (University of British Columbia — funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Health).

Notes: [1] The target for 2007/08 (75%) was adjusted downwards as preliminary information indicates less than 75% of children may be developmentally ready to succeed.

[2] The next data will be available in 2007/08.

Discussion of Results

This performance measure — the percentage of children who enter Kindergarten "ready to succeed" — is based on the Early Development Instrument. This measure reflects the importance of pre-literacy skills in a child's intellectual and social development. For the Early Development Instrument, data are collected on the following five key areas of children's development (the data are then considered cumulatively to suggest the developmental status of populations of children):

- physical health and well-being;
- social competence;
- emotional maturity;
- language and cognitive development; and
- communication skills and general knowledge.

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Family Development link into the three-year data collection cycle at the University of British Columbia. Therefore, the Ministry has only baseline data, and will be unable to report any progress until after data becomes available in late 2007.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2008/09 Target	2006/07 Actual
B.C.'s ranking in the Programme for International Student Assessment, amongst the 10 provinces	2nd[1]	N/A	1st[2]	N/A[3]

Data Source: Programme for International Student Assessment, 2003.

Notes: [1] The most recent PISA results are from PISA 2003.

[2] The Ministry's target for 2008/09 is to be the top PISA jurisdiction in Canada (ranked 1st).

[3] The latest PISA assessment was administered in 2006 — these results will be available in late 2007 or early 2008.

Discussion of Results

At the international level, British Columbia participates in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).[6] Initiated by member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, this assessment provides policy-oriented international indicators of the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students. The Ministry will focus on two of the Programme's subject areas — Reading and Mathematics. This indicator is a valuable tool, as it assesses whether students who are nearing the end of mandatory schooling are able to analyze, reason, and communicate effectively, and whether they demonstrate the capacity for life-long learning.

As B.C. continues to participate in the global economy, it is important that our education system is able to provide graduates with the skills and knowledge to compete at the highest level, and meets the requirements of the labour market. By comparing the achievement of students in B.C. with that of students in other provinces, the Ministry of Education is able to see how well our education system performs in relation to other Canadian jurisdictions.

In future years, student achievement will also be assessed by the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program[7] (the first assessment was administered in the Spring of 2007). The Pan-Canadian Assessment Program will measure performance in mathematics, reading, writing and science, with room for other subjects to be added as the need arises.

Objective 1.2: B.C. children live healthy lifestyles and make responsible life choices

One of the most serious challenges faced by the Province is childhood obesity — rates are increasing dramatically, as are incidences of Type II Diabetes. In August 2006, the Premier created a new portfolio to maintain the focus on healthy living and physical fitness — the Minister of State for ActNow BC. All ministries will continue to work with the Minister of State for ActNow BC to promote physical activity and healthy eating, and to reduce harmful behaviours (such as tobacco use and substance abuse). Physical exercise, proper nutrition and a secure learning environment will allow students to achieve their best.

Instilling healthy habits, such as physical activity, in students while they are young increases the likelihood that those habits will be retained into adulthood. Schools, therefore, offer a unique and ideal setting in which to learn about healthy lifestyles.

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[6] For more information on the Programme for International Student Assessment, please visit: http://www.pisa.oecd.org.

[7] The Pan-Canadian Assessment Program replaced the School Achievement Indicators Program, a cyclical program of pan-Canadian assessments of student achievement which was conducted by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada between 1993 and 2004.

Strategies

The following key strategies and resources were designed to promote students' health and well-being so that they can perform at peak levels:

Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools — The Guidelines were developed to assist schools in making informed choices in providing healthier foods for sale in B.C. schools. By 2009, schools and districts are required to ensure that all foods sold in schools meet the criteria outlined in the Guidelines.

Health Matters — Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Learning Resources — These resources are aligned with the Ministry of Education's Health and Career Education Curriculum and ActNow BC.

Healthy Living Guides for Families — Family guides were developed to enhance healthy eating and physical activity among students and families. The target populations include Grades K-3; Grades 4 to 7; Grades 8 and 9; and Grades 10 to 12.

Action Schools! BC — Action Schools! BC is a school-based strategy providing opportunities for children to be physically active more often. Accepted internationally as a best practice in health promotion, Action Schools! BC started as a pilot project in 2003/04. The results from the pilot study showed an increase in physical activity levels, and healthier hearts and bones. One hundred per cent of B.C. school districts now participate in Action Schools! BC.

Healthy Schools Network — The Ministries of Education and Health launched B.C.'s new Healthy Schools Network in October 2006. The Network is comprised of public and independent schools working together to improve health through the school setting.

The Joint Consortium for School Health — With B.C. as the lead province, the Joint Consortium provides leadership and facilitates a comprehensive and coordinated pan-Canadian approach to school health by building the capacity of the education and health systems to work more effectively together.

Banning Tobacco Use — Smoking continues to be the leading cause of preventable disease, disability and premature death in B.C., and there continues to be a strong link between smoking as a teen and smoking as an adult. The Government passed legislation in March 2007 banning tobacco and smoking in public places and schools. Schools are required to comply with the new legislation effective September 2007.

B.C.'s Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program — Led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program provides produce grown in B.C. to students in elementary schools, along with information for their teachers and families. This program is now in its second year. Effective January 2007, the program expanded from 10 schools (pilot phase) to 51 schools.

New Teacher, Student and Parent Resources to Combat the Use of Crystal Meth — The Ministry of Education has been a key partner in the B.C. Crystal Methamphetamine Strategy. With support from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education developed the school-based awareness component of the Provincial Crystal Methamphetamine Strategy.

Maintain zero tolerance of bullying in B.C. Schools — The Province passed legislation in Spring 2007 requiring all B.C. Boards of Education to have codes of conduct to help make classrooms safer for students and staff. The legislation ensures that Boards of Education will establish standards for appropriate behaviour in every school in B.C. All Boards of Education must establish codes of conduct for students in their districts to prevent bullying and harassment. Students learn better when they feel safe in school.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Target	2005/06 Actual
Rate of tobacco use for youth aged 15 to 19 years	N/A	17%[1]	16.5%	DATA NOT AVAILABLE[2]

Data Source: The Stats Canada *Community Health, Education and Social Services Survey* (CHESS)

Notes: [1] The baseline data was obtained from the BC STATS *Community Health Education and Social Services Survey* (12-month average, surveyed monthly from September 2004 – September 2005).

[2] The Survey has not been conducted long enough to provide the 24 months of data needed to provide two comparable 12-month averages.

Discussion of Results

Tobacco use has serious health implications for students, and although the dangers of tobacco use are well documented, rates of use among youth aged 15 to 19 remain high. Helping students make responsible healthy choices is a Ministry priority, and eliminating the use of tobacco is a key element of the Government's ActNow BC initiative. The rate of tobacco use among youth was chosen as an indicator of responsible decision-making in relation to health.

Although this measure was discontinued in the *2007/08–2009/10 Service Plan* in order to focus on strategic priorities, it remains an important Government objective.

The Ministry is unable to report progress on this measure as there is no data that covers a comparable period of time to that of the baseline data. However, the Ministry of Health will continue to monitor smoking rates for the population of British Columbia.

Rate of physical activity in K-12 students

Due to a change in the question asked on the Ministry's Annual Satisfaction Survey, the measure presented in the *2006/07–2008/09 Service Plan* — the rate of physical activity in K-12 students — is still under development. The new question measures the percentage of students who engage in physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day, for at least five days per week. Baseline data[8] for this measure indicates that 49 per cent of students meet this standard. Changes to the question were made to bring the measure in line with *Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living* (for children and youth).

Objective 1.3 Achievement will improve for all students

The Ministry continued to demonstrate its commitment to achievement and excellence by monitoring, assessing, measuring and publicly reporting on student achievement. In particular, the Ministry strengthened its efforts to improve the overall completion rate by focusing on vulnerable students through initiatives such as:

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements

These are commitments between a school district, Aboriginal communities, and the Ministry of Education to work together to improve the success of Aboriginal students. As of June 2007, the Ministry had signed 35 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements, with a further 15 agreements in the draft stage, and 10 in the planning stage.

StrongStart BC Centres

Nearly one in four B.C. Kindergarten students is not developmentally ready to start school. To help preschool-aged children develop reading skills and get ready for Kindergarten, the Ministry has partnered with school districts to launch StrongStart BC centres. Located in schools with unused and underutilized spaces, the centres will offer a free drop-in program to support families and caregivers to influence children's school readiness.

CommunityLINK

The Ministry continues to fund school-based programs for vulnerable children — all 60 school districts work with community agencies, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, parents and volunteers to provide supports like meal and snack programs, homework clubs, and programs to keep students in school.

Strategies

To manage overall system performance by assessing, measuring, and monitoring student achievement and by publishing the results.

[8] 2006/07 Satisfaction Survey, Ministry of Education.

Performance Results

Please see "Secondary School Completion Rate" on page 14.

Goal 2: A high quality performance-oriented education system

A high quality education system will result in high levels of student achievement.

Objective 2.1: Focus on citizen-centered service delivery

Citizen-centered service delivery — ensuring that clients have convenient access to high quality, seamless services — is a Government priority. Through initiatives such as School Community Connections, StrongStart BC centres, and district literacy plans, the Ministry will focus on integrating services and activities into the community and school settings. By locating similar services together, it may be possible to provide a single point of service for someone who requires support from many different disciplines, such as a child with special needs.

Although the Ministry does not directly provide programs and services, as education services are delivered by Boards of Education, we are nonetheless interested in knowing that clients (parents and students) are satisfied with the education services they receive. The Ministry conducts an annual Satisfaction Survey to measure the satisfaction levels of students, parents, teachers, and staff.

Strategies

- To continue to improve collaboration and cooperation with other ministries, agencies and organizations.
- To focus on School Community Connections in order to integrate services and build community capacity.

Performance Results

Performance Measures	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Target	2006/07 Actual
Satisfaction — percentage of public school parents and students (secondary) satisfied with educational program choices available to them.				
Elementary School Parents	72%	71%	73%	72% Substantively Achieved
Secondary School Parents	62%	62%	63%	63% Achieved
Secondary School Students	49%	47%	49%	48% Substantively Achieved

Data Source: The Annual Satisfaction Survey, Ministry of Education. The Survey can be found at: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/surveys/sat-bas.php .

Notes: In order to improve the ability of the public, stakeholders, and partners to assess the Ministry's progress in achieving its goals, the reporting format has changed from reporting results for sub-categories to reporting results only on the overall category.

Discussion of Results

Parent and student satisfaction with key aspects of the education system is a critical measure in assessing whether the Ministry is meeting the needs of its clients. As well, high levels of client satisfaction indicate that our education system is performing at a high level.

The Ministry met its target for Secondary School parents, and substantively achieved the targets for Elementary School parents and Secondary School students.

Objective 2.2: Focus on career development

A highly educated and skilled workforce is required to improve the productivity and competitiveness of B.C.'s economy, and to meet the demands of the labour market. To support these requirements, the Ministry of Education continues to focus on career development as a key objective of the K-12 education system.

Career development is intended to provide students with knowledge and understanding of their career choice, including the range of choices available to them, the actions required to pursue specific career paths, and the prospects for success in those careers. As well, students should gain the skills required to be successful in the workplace, and develop skills required to work effectively and safely, both as individuals and as members of a team. This objective highlights the connection between skills and knowledge learned in the classroom and the application of those skills and knowledge in the real world, and renders the learning experience more meaningful.

Strategies

- To continue to use the Graduation Program requirements as a means to prepare students for their futures after graduation.
- To focus on Advancement Via Individual Determination as a means to help students in the middle academic range realize their full potential.
- To focus on the Education Planner as a planning resource that helps secondary students make positive decisions regarding their education and career options.
- To increase the number of students who participate in industry training and other workplace preparation programs.
- To increase the number of secondary students who complete dual credit post-secondary courses as part of their Grade 12 Graduation Program.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2004/05 Actual
Transition rate — to post-secondary education or training	69%[1]	74%	75%[2]	72%[3] Not Achieved

Data Source: The 2005/06 Graduate Transition Survey, which follows students who graduated from the 2004/05 school year.

Notes: [1] The "Actual" data includes students who are attending a post-secondary institution full-time, part-time, or are taking some other form of post-secondary training.

[2] In the *2006/07 – 2008/09 Service Plan*, the target of 75% for 2005/06 was inadvertently entered under "Actual".

[3] The most recent data (72%) is from the 2005/06 Graduate Transition Survey, which looks at the 2004/05 school year. The 2006/07 Graduate Transition Survey will be available in October 2007.

Discussion of Results

As one of the key objectives of the education system is to prepare students for full and meaningful participation in society, it is important to measure the rate at which students move from graduation to post-secondary education or training. Together with partners, the Ministry of Education provides students with a high quality education that prepares them for successful careers, whether they take further training, attend post-secondary institutions, or go directly into the workforce. Post-secondary transition rates are a good indicator of both overall student achievement and of the Ministry's success in preparing students for life after graduation.

The annual Graduate Transition Survey indicates the percentage of the previous year's graduates who enrolled in post-secondary education or training following graduation from secondary school. Survey results provide information about graduates' main transition activity during their post-graduation year, and their level of satisfaction with their secondary school education.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Target	2005/06 Actual
Number of students participating in industry training programs	1,367[1]	2,549	3,600	3,740 EXCEEDED

Data Source: Ministry of Education, transcripts data; the Industry Training Authority.

Notes: [1] In order to improve the ability of the public, stakeholders, and partners to assess the Ministry's progress in achieving its goals, the reporting format has changed from reporting results for sub-categories to reporting results only on the overall category.

Discussion of Results

This indicator measures the number of students who participate in industry training programs, such as the Secondary School Apprenticeship program and Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training programs.

Skilled trades programs provide valuable and rewarding training to students. The number of students participating in these programs indicates the success of the education system in attracting students to a career in the trades sector.

As there are challenges in recruiting skilled trades workers, attracting students to the trades sector and providing them with the opportunity to learn relevant skills is critical in order for Government to meet the requirements of the labour market.

Objective 2.3: Continued emphasis on accountability

Accountability is one of the cornerstones of the Government's value system. In an ongoing effort to make the education system more accountable, the Ministry has engaged education partners in examining performance as a means to improve achievement, along with making school and district data publicly available. Clear lines of accountability and transparency are the hallmarks of a strong education system that is focused on quality and achievement.

The challenge in assessing performance is finding the right assessment vehicle to move school districts forward in the work to improve success for each student. The Ministry of Education is currently revising the District Review process because although we achieved a record-breaking completion rate of 79 per cent, our achievement levels have plateaued — we need to find new ways to improve achievement.

During Spring 2007 we piloted new processes for the District Reviews. The new process will continue to be piloted during Fall 2007, with final revision and implementation set to occur in 2008.

Additionally, elements for the new Achievement Contracts (which are replacing the Accountability Contracts) will be clarified, with specific targets for completion rates, literacy and early learning identified. As well, Superintendents of Achievement will be working with districts in response to Achievement Contracts.

Strategies

- To require annual School Plans, annual Achievement Contracts and District Reviews, and make them publicly available.
- To continue to focus on data-based decision-making through assessing performance, measuring progress, reporting results and managing overall system performance.
- To complete Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements for all districts and make them publicly available.
- To develop reporting requirements for schools and school districts related to class size, teacher hiring, terminations, disciplinary actions and professional development. This strategy resulted in legislation to protect students and to provide the public with information about educators who have been disciplined by the B.C. College of Teachers. Under this new legislation, the College's online registry must include:
  - — The name of the person who has been disciplined, and the status of the person's certificate;
  - — A record of any suspensions or cancellations of the person's certificate of qualification or letter of permission to teach;
  - — A record of disciplinary action taken by the B.C. College of Teachers when the discipline relates to physical, sexual or emotional harm to a student, or conduct or competence in breach of College standards.
- To establish a Teachers' Employment Registry — new legislation also requires the B.C. College of Teachers to create an Employment Registry, which will be available to any Board of Education, authority or band that is considering employing a College member. Boards of Education will be required to provide the College with the names of any College members employed by a board during the previous 12 months.
- To enhance parental involvement in School Planning Councils by designing a data literacy training model which will train parents in the use of data to make effective recommendations in School Plans, providing regional support through webcasts, and by monitoring and assessment processes.

Performance Results

Due to a revision of the District Review process, the measure presented in the *2006/07–2008/09 Service Plan* — parental involvement: meeting expectations in District Reviews — has been discontinued.

Due to a revision of the District Review process, the measure presented in the *2006/07–2008/09 Service Plan* — achieving results: meeting expectations in District Reviews — has been discontinued. Parental involvement (in their child's education) and achieving results remain important objectives for the Ministry, and will continue to be closely monitored through the new Achievement Contracts, Superintendents of Achievement, and the revised District Review process.

Report on Resources

Resource Summary Table

	Estimated	Other Authorizations [1]	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses ($000)					
Public Schools	4,360,873	105,090	4,465,963	4,476,303	10,340
Independent Schools	191,285	16,200	207,485	211,037	3,552
Debt Service and Amortization	558,978	0,000	558,978	534,107	(24,871)
Early Learning and Literacy	18,887	0,000	18,887	32,376	13,489
Management Services	12,568	0,000	12,568	12,553	(15)
Executive and Support Services	53,076	0,000	53,076	50,581	(2,495)
Sub-Total Operating Expenses	5,195,667	121,290	5,316,957	5,316,957	0
Adjustments of Prior Year Accruals [2]				(4,508)	(4,508)
Total	**5,195,667**	**121,290**	**5,316,957**	**5,312,449**	**(4,508)**
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)					
Management Services	85		85	77	(8)
Executive and Support Services	228		228	213	(15)
Total	**313**		**313**	**290**	**(23)**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)					
Management Services	75		75	54	(21)
Executive and Support Services	8,677		8,677	4,140	(4,537)
Total	**8,752**		**8,752**	**4,194**	**(4,558)**
Capital Plan ($000)					
Public Schools	181,295		181,295	181,295	0
Total	**181,295**		**181,295**	**181,295**	**0**

[1] "Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies.

[2] Adjustment of prior year's accruals. Amounts reflect adjustment of prior year's expense accruals which were credited to Ministry expense and not available for the Ministry to spend.

Core Business Areas

To achieve its goals and objectives, the Ministry of Education focuses on the following core business areas:

Education Programs — This core business area provides funding to Boards of Education, independent schools, partner groups and societies in support of K-12 education, early learning and literacy.

Debt Service and Amortization — The Ministry provides funding to Boards of Education to finance capital projects, including seismic upgrades, renovations, expansions, new facilities, and buses. As well, it is responsible for debt service and amortization costs.

Public Libraries — As legislated under the *Library Act*, the Ministry provides leadership, advice, training, funding, and programs to the public library system.

Management Services — This core area provides corporate services to operating programs, including financial, budget, human resources, information management, administrative services, freedom of information and privacy services, and general services and assistance for the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education (including boards, agencies and commissions supported by these two ministries).

Executive and Support Services — This core business area provides executive direction for the Ministry and management and program support for K-12 education, early learning and literacy. As well, this area provides support for the office of the Minister of Education, and includes salaries, benefits, allowances, and operating expenses of the Minister and Minister's staff.

Variances

Public Schools — $10.3 million over budget due to the Ministry funding Pay Equity pressures from savings within other sub-votes.

Debt Service and Amortization — $24.9 million below budget primarily due to lower than anticipated interest rates and higher than anticipated sinking fund earnings.

Early Learning and Literacy — $13.4 million over budget due to an additional $11 million spent on literacy programs and $2 million spent to expand the OneCard Library program.

Executive and Support Services — $2.5 million below budget primarily due to $2 million in unspent advertising funding.

Total resources sent to service providers (including School Districts, Independent Schools and Public Libraries) is $4.7 billion or 89% of the Ministry of Education's total expenditures.

Income Statement for Schools or Universities and Colleges or Health Authorities

School Districts	2006/07 Budget	2006/07 Actual	Variance
Combined Income Statement ($000)			
Total Revenue	4,879,082	5,392,000	512,918
Total Expense	4,863,590	5,262,000	398,410
Operating Results	15,492	130,000	114,508
Gain (Loss) on sale of Capital Assets (if applicable)		7,000	7,000
Net Results	**15,492**	**137,000**	**121,508**

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